

B-4468

SCHOOL BUILDING NO. 112

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

This Beaux Arts schoolhouse dates to 1921. It is a four-story building constructed of brown brick with smooth stone trim. Its details are Classical, and occur primarily at the two entrances to the building. Renovation for housing has occurred. The north elevation of the building has been altered. Private access.

MD INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES FORM  
SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER SURVEY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name School Building No. 112

other names/site number William M. Alexander School/B-4468

2. Location

street & number 1330 Laurens St.

not for publication

city or town Baltimore

vicinity N/A

state Maryland

code MD

county

Baltimore City

code 510

zip code 21217

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

N/A

4. National Park Service Certification

N/A

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

Total

1

MSDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
(School Building No. 112))  
(Baltimore City, MD)

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION

Sub: school

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

Sub: multiple dwelling

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Beaux-Arts

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

roof

walls BRICK

other marble

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance See continuation sheet.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Ethnic Heritage

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Period of Significance 1921-40

Significant Dates 1921

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder J.E. Laferty, architect

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

#### 9. Major Bibliographical References

##### Maps

Bromley, G.W. and Co. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Vol. 1. Philadelphia: 1885, 1896.  
Hopkins, G.M. Map of the City of Baltimore, Maryland. 1876, 1877.  
Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps, Baltimore, Maryland, Vols. 2,3, and 7. New York: 1890, 1901, 1914, 1928.  
Simmons, Isaac. 1852 Revision of the Thomas H. Poppleton Map. Baltimore: 1852.

Archives of the Board of Education, Baltimore City

Baltimore City Archives, Records of the Board of Education

Baltimore City School Survey (1951, revised 1961) and Context Statement (Maryland Historical Trust, 1990), CHAP files.

#### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property \_\_\_\_\_

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
(School Building No. 112)  
(Baltimore City, MD)

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UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

1    —    —    —      3    —    —    —  
2    —    —    —      4    —    —    —

— See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are based on a city lot(s) retaining original property lines.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Jo Lampl & Kay Fanning/Architectural Historians  
organization Robinson & Associates      date July 1992  
street & number 1710 Connecticut Ave., NW      telephone (202) 234-2333  
city or town Washington      state DC      zip code 20009

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_  
street&number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Baltimore      state MD      zip code \_\_\_\_\_

NPS Form 10-900-a  
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

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School Building No. 112  
**name of property**  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
**county and State**

HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

**Geographic Organization:** Piedmont

**Chronological/Developmental Period(s):** Industrial/Urban Dominance

**Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):** Architecture, Landscape  
Architecture, and Community Planning; Social/Education/Cultural

**Resource Type:**

**Category:** building(s)

**Historic Environment:** urban

**Historic Function(s) and Use(s):** education

**Known Design Source:** J.E. Laferty, architect

NPS Form 10-900-a  
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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National Park Service

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School Building No. 112  
**name of property**  
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DESCRIPTION

A Beaux-Arts structure dating to 1921, this school is a stately four-story edifice. The rectangular building has a five-bay elevation on Laurens Street and an imposing three-bay entrance elevation on Calhoun. The prominent central three-bay entrance sections on both elevations project slightly and are far more elaborate than their flanking bays. Their Doric detailing is executed in stone.

Three levels of stone beltcourses girdle the building above the basement, third, and fourth floors; the latter acting as a cornice. Above the prominent cornice is an attic story. At the roof, there is a secondary, more narrow molded cornice, also of stone. The centrally-placed entrance has an elaborate stone surround consisting of a segmental pediment containing a cartouche in its tympanum, carried on consoles supported by pilasters. The number of the school, 112, is carved within the cartouche. Two pairs of two-story brick pilasters surmount the entrance above the basement level, supporting a stone entablature; in the frieze level above each pilaster are discs on square blocks, with guttae below.

The north and south elevations were originally characterized by central pavilioned entrances and wings containing bands of double-hung windows--four in each bay. On the ground floor, windows were 4/4, while on the upper floors they were 6/6. The center section of the facade on Laurens Street has stone trim of shallow profile. The ground-floor entrance had a simple, stone hood supported by consoles. On the rear elevation (facing the parking lot), the entrance was raised and approached via stairs joined at a perron.

The central bay of the Calhoun Street elevation features large windows in the upper stories, which consist on the second and third floors of a large central window flanked by narrow vertical lights. The narrow window openings to either side are set between the brick pilasters and contain two, double-hung, one-over-one windows placed on top of one another, with an aluminum spandrel above. On the fourth floor, there are five openings, also containing a combination of operating windows and aluminum spandrels. Originally, in the central grouping of three windows, was a center window of 6/6, double-hung sash, and side lights of 2/2 sash. The narrow windows

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between the piers featured three panes, the bottom one of which pivoted.

In the end bays of the Calhoun Street facade, two large panels of patterned brick flank the generously glazed center bay with smaller horizontal patterned brick sections above in the attick story. The brickwork in these panels contrasts with the brick work of the main wall.

The north facade shows extensive remodelling to convert the building to housing. The current flat, planar patterning is somewhat Post-Modern in character. The windows on this elevation, as with the others, have been altered, and contain new aluminum window systems.



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National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Section 8 Page 1

School Building No. 112  
**name of property**  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
**county and State**SIGNIFICANCE

This school was designed to serve as the first African-American elementary school in the city in 1921. It represents a new era in public education, when the institution of the "6-3-3" plan called for "elementary" schools to include kindergarten through grade six. Elementary schools thus replaced the former grammar/primary school system.

School Building No. 112 at Laurens and Calhoun was constructed in August 1921, and occupied in September of that year. It was built to serve the increasing African-American community in West Baltimore. Designed by architect J.E. Laferty and constructed by J.L. Robinson for \$335,000, it accommodated 1012 students.<sup>1</sup> The school's design was approved by J.E. Crowther, Inspector of Buildings.

The school's history (and name) is tied to that of a prominent local church in the survey area. The idea for an all African-American elementary school began with the Reverend William M. Alexander, the pastor of the Sharon Baptist Church (See B-4441).<sup>2</sup> His Church initially held classes for African-American students in its basement, inspiring Alexander to petition the city for an African-American elementary school.)

The construction of the school is significant for its fireproofing innovations. Although fireproofing mechanisms were instituted in public

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<sup>1</sup> A second elementary school for black children (No. 122) was erected at Preston Street near Druid Hill Avenue in 1927. It was designed by Flournoy & Flournoy and built by Mason, Curley & Brady. It held 934 students.

<sup>2</sup> "The fight for better school building and colored teachers for schools attended by colored children in the City of Baltimore was begun immediately after the close of the Civil War. Quite naturally, the colored ministers of the Gospel were the leaders in the movement." "Fifty Years in the colored schools of Baltimore," Afro-American, May 1924.

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schools of the 1890s, it wasn't until the erection of this school that fireproofing went one step forward, replacing some wooden flooring with concrete and covering partitions in fireproof materials. The Chief Engineer of the City, rather than the school's architect, is credited with recommending fireproof construction.<sup>3</sup>

The building contained a large assembly hall on the ground floor, large classrooms on the first floor, and classrooms and teachers' lounges on the third floor.

In 1951, a temporary, portable frame school was built to the north of the school on Calhoun Street to handle the increase in students. This school housed four classrooms (see attached).

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<sup>3</sup> "Extensive School Program Being Carried Out By City Is Attracting Attention From All Parts of Country," Baltimore Municipal Journal, Volume XV, Number 5, March 10, 1927. (Baltimore City Archives)

SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER/PENN-NORTH  
RECONNAISSANCE-LEVEL SURVEY FORM

Survey No. B-4468

Neg. No. 57

Historic Name School Building No. 112

Current Name/Use Laurens House

Address(es) 1330 Laurens Street

Resource/Property Type

☐ Rowhouses  
☐ Commercial Structure  
☒ Public/Institutional Building  
☐ Public Housing  
☐ Site  
☐ Other

☐ Attached

☒ Freestanding

Note: \_\_\_\_\_

Stories 4

Primary Material brick Secondary Material marble

Roof Form flat

No. of Bays in Unit/Facade 3 (?) If Rowhouse: ☐ Flat Front ☐ Swell Front ☐ Porch

Window Type: ☒ Double-Hung  
☒ 1/1 Sash  
☐ 2/2 Sash  
☐ 2/1 Sash  
☐ ? Other Sash  
☐ Transom

Door Type: ☒ Single-Leaf  
☐ Double-Leaf  
☐ Number of panels (if visible)  
☒ Transom

Architectural Style Beaux-Arts Date c. post-1914

**Noteworthy Features:** Slightly projecting center bay. Three levels of stone beltcourses. Door has elaborate marble surround: segmental pediment with cartouche in tympanum, carried on consoles, supported by pilasters; two-story brick pilasters surmount entrance, support marble entablature with flattened disks capping pilaster. Patterned brick infills to either side of projecting center bay. Extensive remodelling visible on north facade due housing conversion.

Alterations: ☐ Formstone ☒ Stucco  
☐ Vinyl/Aluminum ☐ Window/Door Changes  
☐ Awnings ☐ Missing Cornice Elements  
☐ First-Floor Use Change ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Status: ☒ Occupied ☐ Vacant ☐ Mixed

NR Evaluation: ☒ Contributing ☐ Non-Contributing  
Recommended for Intensive Level: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Surveyor: Joey Lampl

Affiliation: Robinson & Associates

Date: February-April 1992

**PRESS, TMAN**

## WHAT COULD IT

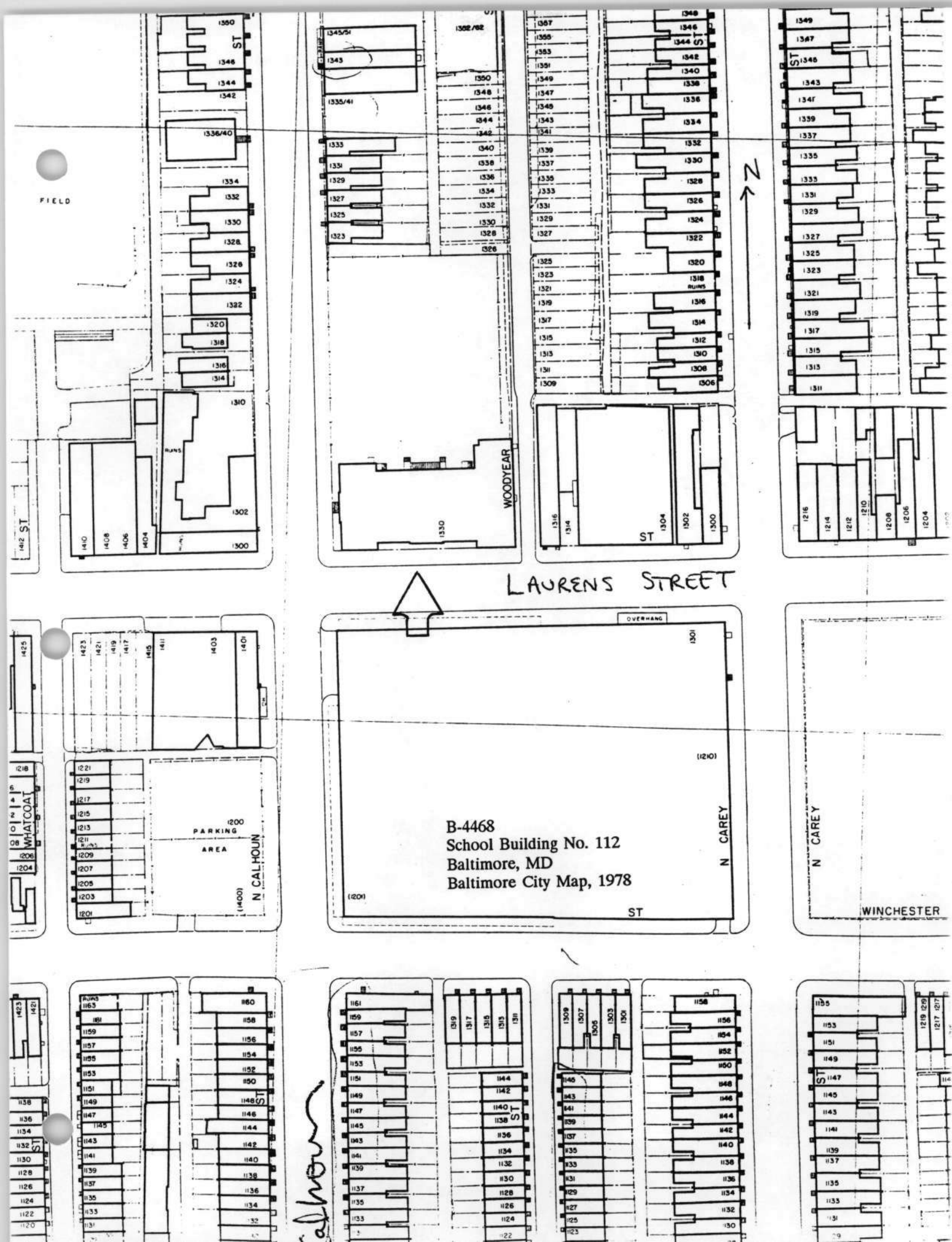
**N. CALHOUN**

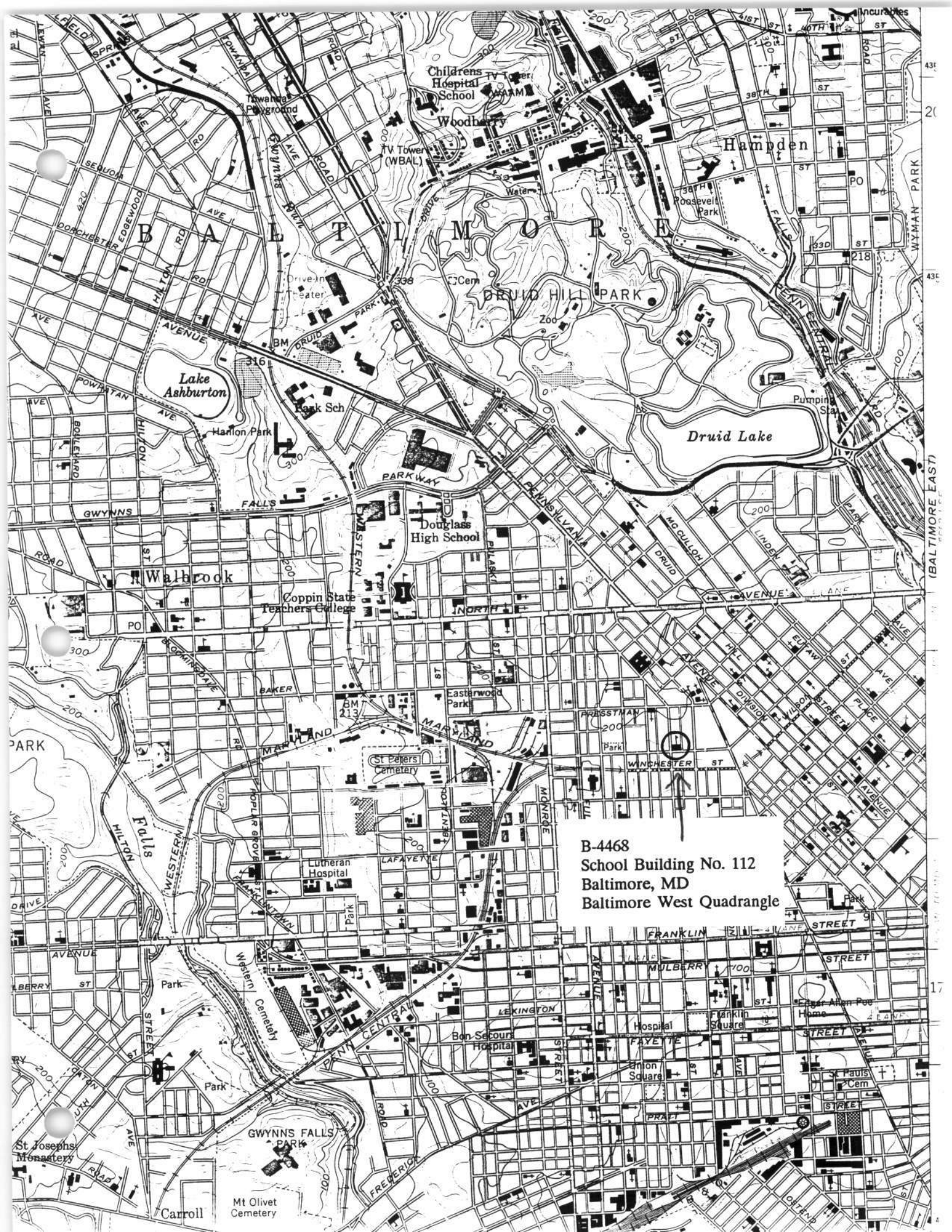
**N. WOODYEAR**

(EARLIER BUILDINGS  
ON SITE)

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School Building No. 112  
Baltimore, MD  
Sanborn Map, 1914







B-4468  
School Building No. 112  
Baltimore, MD  
Baltimore West Quadrangle



SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER / PELL - NORTH

# B-4468

BALTIMORE, MD

ELIZABETH CO LAMPL

MARCH 1992

CITY OF BALTIMORE, COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

HISTORIC: SCHOOL NO. 112 (SECOND SCHOOL HOUSE; SEE INTERSECTION OF CAREY  
CURRENT: LAURENS HOUSE  
SCHOOL STS.)

CORNER, CALHOUN & LAURENS STREETS

VIEW OF WEST ELEVATION

ROLL 5 / NEG 8

1 of 3





SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER / PENN-NORTH

#B-4468

BALTIMORE, MD

ELIZABETH QO LAMPL

MARCH 1992

CITY OF BALTIMORE, COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

CURRENT: LAURENS HOUSE

HISTORIC: SCHOOL NO. 112

CORNER, CALHOUN & LAURENS STS.

VIEW OF NORTH ELEVATION

ROLL 5 / NEG 7

2 of 3



SANDTOWN - WINCHESTER / PENN - NORTH

#B-4468

BALTIMORE, MD

ELIZABETH 90 LAMP

MARCH 1992

CITY OF BALTIMORE, COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

TEMPORARY SCHOOLHOUSE

1343 BLOCK, N. CALHOUN

NORTH AND WEST ELEVATIONS

ROLL 5 / NEG 5

3 of 3